COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
Colchester, CT

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, January 24, 2023
6:00 PM
Town Hall Meeting Room 1 (Hybrid)

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Alexander Oliphant, Vice-Chair Mary Tomasi (via Zoom), Secretary Margo Gignac, Donna Antonacci, Rosemary Gignac, Michelle Millington, Christopher Rivers

ADMINISTRATION PRESENT: Superintendent Daniel P. Sullivan, III, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Charles E. Hewes, Principal of Jack Jackter Intermediate School Elise Butson, Principal of Bacon Academy Amy Begué

OTHERS PRESENT: Director of Human Resources Shannon Ramsby, Business Director Rachel Linkkila, Director of Digital Learning and Innovation Darren Smith, Network Manager Robert Meany, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk Heather Petit

1. MEETING OPENING

1.1 Call to Order

Chair Oliphant called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM

1.2 Roll Call

Chair Oliphant conducted a roll call of the Board.

1.3 Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Oliphant led the Board and attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion by: M.Gignac
To move item 3.2 JJIS Robotics Team Presentation to be 1.4 on the agenda.
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: R.Gignac, M.Gignac, M.Millington, M.Tomasi, D.Antonacci, C.Rivers, A.Oliphant
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

1.4 JJIS Robotics Team Presentation

Student members of the Lego Robotics Team 8010 Megawhats gave a presentation on their project.

In the qualifying event Lego Robotics Team 8010 Megawhats won the Innovation Award.

This award is for the team that utilizes diverse resources for their innovation project to help them gain a comprehensive understanding of their problem, have a creative, well researched solution and effectively communicate their findings to judges and the community. At the state competition, the team won the judges award which allows judges to recognize teams that stand out for reasons other than the required award categories.

The Board presented certificates to the student members in honor of their outstanding achievements.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

2.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct

Amy Domeika, Jeff Graham, Kate Legault, and Kathy Collins-Voiland spoke in support of the 10/32 Committee's request for a monument on the Bacon Academy field in honor of Jake Chapman and Tyler Graham. Ms. Legault distributed a picture and specifications of the monument to the board. The monument would contain the slogan, "It's a good day to be a Bobcat."

3. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

3.1 Superintendent Report

Superintendent Sullivan said he has continued meeting with teachers and administrators as and will be meeting with the PTO collaborative and student groups. In addition, Mr. Sullivan said he is having individual meetings with Board members.

Mr. Sullivan said he and Central Office have been working diligently on the budget. Mr. Sullivan will be presenting the budget at the Board meeting on February 7, 2023.

Mr. Sullivan said he will be working with and leading the school safety and security team.

Superintendent Sullivan spoke to recent school delays. He met with the Director of Educational Operations Mario in regard to the ice and recommended changes to support the timely opening of schools.

3.2 JJIS Robotics Team Presentation

Item moved to 1.4

4. *CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 *Approval of the BOE Special Meeting Minutes of January 10, 2023

4.2 *Approval of the BOE Special Meeting Minutes of January 19, 2023

Motion by: M.Tomasi
To approve the consent agenda with a noted change that the January 10, 2023 minutes were a Special Meeting.
Second: C.Rivers
Roll Call: R.Gignac, M.Tomasi, M.Gignac, M.Millington, D.Antonacci, C.Rivers, A.Oliphant
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

5. *CURRICULUM DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

5.1 Preschool and Grade 3 Wonders Curriculum

Dr. Hewes said the literacy curriculum sub-committee met with administrators and teachers in regard to the Wonders program. Mary Tomasi said approval of this program would help maintain continuity for Colchester Public School Students. Ms. Tomasi thanked the administration and teachers for their time and work.

Motion by: M.Tomasi
To approve the preschool and Grade 3 Wonders curriculum
Second: M.Gignac
Roll Call: M.Tomasi, M.Gignac, D.Antonacci, R.Gignac, C.Rivers, M.Millington, A.Oliphant
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

6. *FINANCIAL DISCUSSION/ ACTION ITEMS

6.1 Business Director Update

Rachel Linkkila presented the November and December 2022 monthly budget reports. Ms. Linkkila said that the reason the report shows a large amount of funds already utilized is because all salaries are already encumbered for the year.

Rachel Linkkila will get the percent reimbursement of excess cost and send that information to the Board. Ms. Linkkila also said that Colchester Public Schools was able to lock in diesel pricing. In addition, the District is not subject to the same increase from Eversource that is impacting individual households.

6.2 *Budget Transfer Request for Items Over $5,000

Motion by: M.Tomasi
To approve budget transfers over $5,000
Second: C.Rivers
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

6.3 Budget Transfer Request for Items Under $5,000

Informational only

7. *FINANCIAL DISCUSSION/ ACTION ITEMS

7.1 Director of Human Resources Update

Shannon Ramsby gave an update on personnel hiring, resignations and retirements. Mr. Ramsby said the Human Resources Department will be developing an updated hiring process to create more uniformity across the District. Mr. Ramsby spoke to recent hirings including a Special Education Paraprofessional for Bacon Academy and a Nurse substitute.

8. *PRIORITY DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

8.1 *To Amend Board of Education Bylaw 9131 Relative to Standing Committees

Motion by: R.Gignac
To amend Board of Education Bylaw 9131 Relative to Standing Committees
Second: M.Millington
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.

The Board agreed to revisit standing committee responsibilities in the future if any changes are deemed to be made after the committees begin meeting.

8.2 *Appointment of Standing Committee Members

Chair Oliphant appointed the following Board members to committees.

Budget Committee: M.Millington, C.Rivers, A.Oliphant
Policy Committee: D.Antonacci, M.Tomasi
Curriculum Committee: M.Tomasi, D.Antonacci, R.Gignac
Facilities Committee: M.Gignac, C.Rivers
Communications Committee: M.Gignac, D.Antonacci, M.Millington

8.3 *Request by 10/32 Committee
Superintendent Sullivan said it is important that the request for monuments be looked at to ensure equity and to establish guidelines. Ms. Begué spoke to a tree, bench and other small memorials that had been placed many years ago.

The Board discussed the issue of equity and the importance of establishing guidelines and policy moving forward. The Board discussed that as the previous principal had not brought the request forward to the Board but approved the project and two-thirds of the monument was already built, they would move to approve the request. The Board agreed with Superintendent Sullivan that they would like to establish guidelines to help families, community and Board to navigate any requests in the future. The Board asked the Policy Committee to look at this going forward. Margo Gignac requested the committee make a compromise so that it would be inclusive of all students that have passed.

Motion by: M.Tomasi
To approve the monument for Tyler Graham and Jake Chapman for Bacon Academy
Second: C.Rivers
Roll Call: All in favor
Vote: Unanimous; motion carried.
Ms. Begue said the previous principal agreed to the placement of the monument but it was never brought to the Board.

9. <u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u>
9.1 For Public Comments, Please See Bylaw on Meeting Conduct
Mike Egan thanked the Board for moving forward with the monument and for being thoughtful and respectful. Mr. Egan stated he is looking forward to more in person meetings moving forward.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Oliphant adjourned the meeting at 7:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather R. Petit
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Board Clerk